



In 2022, as we celebrate the 10th anniversary of NCFC, it is good to recognize, acknowledge, and appreciate what God has done through our nursing leaders: "Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you." (Heb.13:7).

The Bible, and notably Jesus, teaches us to be humble, and to not exalt ourselves (Matt.11:29; Matt. 15; Prov. 11:2; Rom. 12:16; Phil. 2:3-4; Prov. 15:33, etc). We are reminded that we are, in our work and in our personal lives, to be salt and light; and to be encouragers to our patients, and to one another (Heb. 13:1; Matt.5:13-16) "Therefore, encourage one another and build one another up." (1Thes.5:11).

Further, it is important for us as Christian nurses to give credit where credit is due; to acknowledge beautiful commitment, joy, hard work, and service for Christ in someone when we see it. Betty Hitchcock is indeed a nurse worthy of recognition. In her article below, Jan Lockett shines a light on Betty's life as a Christian nursing leader.

REMEMBERING GOD'S BLESSINGS

Betty Hitchcock

By Janice Lockett



Betty and Nurses Christian Fellowship Canada (NCFC)

One of Betty's first encounters with NCFC was when she was a student nurse living in the nurses' residence beside the Saint John General Hospital in Saint John, New Brunswick. She was intrigued by the gatherings of nurses who met in Lois Floyd's room where she heard sweet singing, much laughter and lots of chatter. Lois Floyd was a graduate nurse who continued to live in residence for a number of years and had a passion for reaching student nurses for Christ. Soon Betty joined her fellow students in Lois's room and discovered how she, too, could have the same joy and peace she saw in those nurses. I recall Betty saying, "I wanted to have what I saw they had."



Betty, the Nurse Educator

I, in turn, first met Betty as a student nurse and she was an instructor (and later Assistant Director) at the Saint John School of Nursing. I remember being very impressed by her integrity, care and concern for her students and patients. Personally, I will never forget when I was ill for a couple of months when I was a first year student. Betty was so kind and encouraging, understanding my anxiety on returning to nursing after such a lengthy absence so early in my training.

A former student Marilyn Conley has this special memory from her second year of training: "Betty came faithfully to my dorm room for a number of weeks to lead us NCF gals through a study of Hebrews. I remember how she brought out such interesting things from the passages we studied. I learned so much! It is still one of my favourite books. I am ever grateful that she took the time to meet with us and teach us from God's Word. It was the beginning of a long friendship that lasts to this day!"

Betty, the Nursing Colleague

Marg Winchester had the following to say about Betty as a colleague: "I have had the privilege of knowing you (Betty) for over 47 years!! I will never forget meeting you in 1975 when I was hired as a brand new instructor at the Saint John School of Nursing! I had only been a full time nurse for 2½ years, fresh out of the BN program at the University of New Brunswick in Fredericton!

You were the assistant director of the SJSN with Anne Thorne as director. Betty, you were so supportive, caring and knowledgeable and became a wonderful mentor to me! In 1975, we developed and taught our 145 first year nursing students Psychosocial Development. It was quite challenging when teaching large classes. However, we managed to integrate innovative teaching techniques such as role playing and gaming! Remember how many exams and papers we had to prepare and mark?"

Betty, the Visionary

Betty served tirelessly in many capacities on the Atlantic NCF Committee and we remain indebted to her for her vision, passion, enthusiasm and how she always lives her life as an example of her faith.

Marg voices her appreciation of Betty's vision and passion with these words. "You were instrumental in organizing a very active and meaningful Nurses' Christian Fellowship group, especially involving young student nurses. Remember our meetings where students and nurses were able to examine wide ranging spiritual dimensions in their nurse-patient relationships? I know that each NCF event (whether it be our monthly meetings, delicious dessert parties, annual conferences or yearly

retreats at your home), brought us together in prayer, song, purpose and celebration! You helped us to organize our many guest speakers where we learned so much. This included parish nursing, integrating spirituality into patient care, church initiatives, mission work abroad, scripture and so much more!

I loved our day-long retreats in your home (usually on a snowy winter January weekend in your cozy home)! We would pick a focus, study our Bibles, eat a delicious lunch followed by crepes, ice cream and chocolate sauce and sing hymns based upon our reflections during the day."

Betty, the Community Volunteer

Betty also serves her community with this same zeal in her involvement with Big Brothers and Big Sisters, the Kidney Foundation of Canada and the Canadian Cancer Society.

Marg makes this admission. "Because of your influence, Betty, I became active with Big Brothers and Big Sisters, the United Way and Atlantic NCF."

Betty, the Cancer Survivor

More than two decades after her initial cancer diagnosis, Betty continues to testify to God's faithfulness and love. I remember her telling us that, even when she was too weak to turn off the TV remote when undergoing chemotherapy, she knew that underneath her were His everlasting arms.

Betty the Gracious Hostess

After the passing of her husband, George, Betty continued to welcome nurses, students and graduates to her home often providing a luncheon in addition to study of the Word, singing and prayer.



Anne Hawes - a past National Coordinator for NCF

Anne Hawes, a past National Chair for NCF, recalls the gracious hospitality she received in Betty's home. "Whenever visiting Saint John, I would receive a warm welcome from Betty. I was assigned to her Newfoundland-themed bedroom and enjoyed great talks in her cozy living room. When George was alive, the two of them took me to their cabin and George introduced me to his ATV and fishing in the picturesque stream right near the cabin. Gizmo, their little dog, was a big part of my visits and was dearly loved by both Betty and George. We would chat about church, family, and NCF. Betty felt blessed to have George in her life and I felt blessed to have the two of them in mine!"



Judith Fanaken and Fronica Yiu also remember Betty's gracious hospitality when they visited Saint John in 2012 and participated in their committee meeting in Moncton. Betty picked them up from the airport and prepared accommodation and breakfast during their stay. Her gorgeous smile and welcoming arms, her cheerful stories and interactions with her dog Benji were unforgettable.



Betty, the Adventure Lover

Our Betty, however, was not all work and no play! Although she was practical, reliable and dependable, Betty was also fun-loving with an adventuresome spirit. I can recall the obvious enjoyment Betty and Faith Stiles shared in their rapid-fire exchange of teasing remarks over lunch that followed our committee meetings.

Marg shares remembrances of some of her adventures with Betty. "Do you remember our NCF canoe trips in the early 1980s? You and Jean Kimball were amazing organizers along with our 2 expert guides from Fredericton. We set off from the beautiful shores of North Lake (just outside Canterbury) with 10 to 15 student nurses and instructors and we would paddle, set up tents, cook, worship, paddle again, brave the border guards in Orient and Forest City, Maine and be heralded on the front page of the Woodstock Bugle!!! These adventures and the beauty of nature along with amazing Christian fellowship will never be forgotten!"

Betty. Our Thanks

I am so thankful for the gift Betty has been to me personally and also to NCF Canada.

And with a final word from Marg Winchester: "Betty, we can't thank you enough for your amazing leadership skills, devotion to NCF and the production of our NCF (Atlantic) newsletter, the Link, which truly linked us together in Christian fellowship. May God bless you."

The story, however, does not end here. Charlotte Conley, the daughter-in-law of Marilyn Conley (mentioned at the beginning in this article), is the new NB Chair. God is so faithful in raising up a new generation of nurses to serve with NCF. Indeed, "We'll praise Him for all that is past and trust Him for all that's to come"

By Janice Lockett



Now retired, Jan enjoyed most of her nursing career as a public health nurse but did spend four special years as school nurse/assistant housemother for children of missionaries in Japan. She also taught community health at the University of New Brunswick in Saint John and worked on curriculum development for a personal support worker agency. She has a deep appreciation for the impact Nurses Christian Fellowship Canada has had in her personal and work life.



Merry Christmas

AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR

At this very special time of the year, many things come to mind for those of us who are nurses and who are Christian.

- For many it could be an opportunity to use the words “Christmas” and “Jesus Christ” in our greetings and discussions with patients/clients, friends, family, neighbours; when at other times of the year it might be discouraged or forbidden.
- This time of year is a time when we may be able to attribute our care-giving skills, our patience, our kindness, to God, His gifts to us.
- This time of year we can send Christmas and New Year greetings to friends and neighbours, and share the good news in our messages.
- This time of year many light up their windows, doors, homes, with bright lights in celebration of God’s love, Christ’s birth and sacrifice. We do not put the light of the good news, our light, under a basket, but on a stand so many can see.

May God bless you as you serve Him. May you have opportunities this season and this coming year to honour Him in all you do. But do not forget: He loves you! You do not need to earn your salvation. He was born, and has died for you.

Matthew 5:15 (“The Message”) Here’s another way to put it: You’re here to be light, bringing out the God-colours in the world. God is not a secret to be kept. We’re going public with this, as public as a city on a hill. If I make you light-bearers, you don’t think I’m going to hide you under a bucket, do you? I’m putting you on a light stand. Now that I’ve put you there on a hilltop, on a light stand—shine! Keep open house; be generous with your lives. By opening up to others, you’ll prompt people to open up with God, this generous Father in heaven.

**We’d love to
hear from you**

Contact us at
www.ncfcanada.ca or
nationalchair@ncfcanada.ca

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